

The bottom line is this is an important bill. It is going to help people and will continue our commitment to fight torture and to be a player in rehabilitating the lives of those who have suffered from the use of torture. I encourage all of colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to thank my friend for his powerful and significant statement.

Mr. Speaker, I have no additional requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute to thank my friends and colleagues for their very strong statements and their passion on this issue.

The gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), who is the ranking Democrat on the Helsinki Commission, we work together. There is no division. There is no air between our shoulders as we promote human rights in general and the elimination, or a zero tolerance policy towards torture within the OSCE.

There are 55 countries that make up the OSCE. At the parliamentary assemblies and with bilateral meetings and with country visits, we bring this issue up. We bring it up with the heads of state, we go to gulags, like the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF), who is also a member of our commission, and we do all that we can to stop torture in the first place.

But as this bill seeks to do, there are victims, they number in the millions, and their needs are not being cared for in many instances, especially overseas. The lucky ones make it here as emigres and as asylum seekers, and we have to make sure that both domestically and internationally, we try to mitigate that enormous pain and the nightmares they carry with them. As we know from our hearings and from our site visits from talking to these victims, maybe they cannot be cured fully and completely, but the pain can be eliminated to a great extent, and they can develop coping mechanisms and the like in order to deal with it and live a more normal life despite the fact that they have suffered so horrifically.

So I want to thank my friends and colleagues. And again, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), who knows this personally, who is a Holocaust survivor and is always out front on human rights. It is always great to work as a teammate with him. And, again, I thank the gentleman from Maryland for his kinds words, as well as my friend and colleague from Minnesota, I want to thank her as well.

Mr. SABO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the important work that is being done to aid victims of torture, and to reemphasize my support for the reauthorization of the Torture Victims Relief Act, TVRA.

Minneapolis, Minnesota, is home to the United States first comprehensive torture treatment center, the Center for Victims of Torture, CVT. When CVT opened in 1985 they were

the first center in the United States and only the third in the entire world.

Freedom from torture is a universal and fundamental human right. Yet torture continues to take place in more than 120 countries worldwide. It is estimated that one-third of the world's 12 million refugees are victims of torture. Politicians, journalists, teachers, students, religious leaders, trade union and human rights activists are all targets. The aim of torture is not to kill the victim, but to break down the victim's personality. Crippled, traumatized, and humiliated, the victims are returned to their communities as a warning to others.

Torture is fundamentally a political weapon, employed by repressive regimes to shape cultures through fear. For over a decade, what the clients in Minnesota have taught us, as well as victims from over 70 other nations of the world, is that torture:

Targets leadership of the opposition, to snuff out creativity and emerging movements, which may threaten the regimes corrupt hold on society;

Sends a message of fear throughout the network of that leader's family and community of followers and admirers. As a bishop from Africa once said about the meaning of torture, the message is clear: "If they'll do this to me, what will they do to my flock?"

In Minnesota we have also learned how traumas of this severity and scale have a trans-generational effect, shaping the health, the hopes and the aspirations of future generations.

Because of these significant and predictable effects, torture is the most effective weapon against democracy. Even after a dictatorial regime has fallen, as it has in Iraq, we can expect that the impact of torture will be felt for generations: leadership broken and lost; their families and communities still frightened and disengaged from public life; a profound lack of trust in public institutions, police, and courts; a lesson in forced political apathy learned and lived out every day.

There are more than 500,000 torture survivors in the United States alone—refugees and asylum seekers who have fled repressive regimes. In recent years, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of victims of torture seeking help at U.S. rehabilitation centers. In the U.S. there are 34 rehabilitation centers and programs joined together under the National Consortium of Torture Treatment Programs, which was first started by the Center for Victims of Torture in Minnesota.

I have seen leadership restored and people made whole after they have received care at CVT. Restoring a torture survivor to full health has a lasting benefit for the entire community. Former clients of CVT are now public school teachers, small business owners, nurses, doctors and more. I would like to commend CVT for their tireless work on behalf of torture victims in the U.S. and worldwide, and encourage my colleagues to support the reauthorization of the Torture Victims Relief Act.

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in strong support of H.R. 1813, the Torture Victims Relief Authorization Act.

I am especially proud that the first Center for Victims of Torture in the United States is located in Minnesota. Minnesota's Center for Victims of Torture is certainly one of the premier centers for torture survivors in the entire world.

Minnesota is home to about 14,000 victims of torture, and there are some 400,000 victims of torture in our country. Even though people are becoming increasingly aware of the issue of torture, support and treatment for the victims have often been lacking.

That's where the center, with its excellent leadership, comes in. We in Minnesota have learned much, and now we want to bring that leadership, and the path-breaking work of the center, to the rest of the country.

Mr. Speaker, this important legislation provides support for Minnesota's Center for Victims of Torture and will enable our world-renowned Center to continue providing rehabilitation and other critical services to victims of torture.

All Minnesotans can be proud of our Center for Victims of Torture, which helps victims of torture recover from their horrific pain, suffering and scars.

Mr. Speaker, the issues of torture and human rights have finally penetrated the global consciousness, and I urge my colleagues to support passage of this important legislation.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1813, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules, and on the motion to instruct conferees postponed yesterday. Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 1006, by the yeas and nays;

House Concurrent Resolution 320, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 3491, by the yeas and nays;

And the motion to instruct on H.R. 1, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. The remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

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#### CAPTIVE WILDFIRE SAFETY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). The unfinished business is the question of suspending the rules and passing the bill, H.R. 1006, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. GILCHREST) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1006, as amended, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.